



**BRITISH ASSOCIATION
FOR
BIOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY
AND
OSTEOARCHAEOLOGY**

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
BOURNEMOUTH, 15TH SEPTEMBER 2012**

1	Apologies
	Tim Thompson.
2	Minutes of the last AGM Accepted as a true record. To go on website.
3	Matters arising None
4	Chair's Report (Chris Knüsel)
4.1	<u>London Anthropology Day, 5th July 2012</u> BABAO hosted a very successful stall at the London Anthropology Day, which is organised by the Royal Anthropological Society and took place at the British Museum. The event is attended mainly by A-Level students and provides an excellent opportunity to promote the disciplines represented by BABAO. Thanks are due to Stephanie Vincent (Membership Secretary) and Jelena Bekvalac (Representative from a Museum) and the three student volunteers Shirley Curtis, Priscilla Ulguim and Alison Rae Atkin for their hard work on the day. BABAO will hopefully become a regular contributor to this event, which also includes seminars, and a call for volunteers will be sent out next year.
4.2	<u>Ministry of Justice updated human remains document</u> Simon Mays (Representative from a Professional Organisation) reports that the new form will make it much easier to retain human skeletal remains, as the 2-year reburial clause has been removed. This will also apply retrospectively to remains excavated between 2008 and 2011 (while the 2-year reburial condition was part of the form). An English Heritage survey in advance of the changes showed that the general public supports research on, as well as the exhibition and curation of, archaeological human remains. A number of members pointed out that the form has not yet been updated on the web, and SM will investigate this. Another issue raised was the question of best practice guidelines for reburial. None exist to date, and the BABAO committee will discuss this issue at their next meeting in November.

4.3 Trends in Biological Anthropology Series

Tina Jakob (Non-Executive Member) reports that the mid-January deadline suggested by Oxbow for submission of completed manuscripts resulting from the previous conference is not feasible, and this will be re-negotiated with Oxbow. As the Edinburgh conference received very few submissions, these may be combined with the Bournemouth proceedings. The current arrangement with Oxbow, to produce the conference publication as a serial, will be reviewed after 3 years. To facilitate tighter submission deadlines and improve planning the conference publication, it was suggested to invite members to declare their willingness to submit a paper at the time they submit their abstract. The BABAO committee will discuss this option at their next meeting in November.

4.4 Database of UK Human Skeletal Collections

This database will be completed at Durham University and will be open to all BABAO members. Tina Jakob will help with the general organisation of the database. Relevant organisations will be asked to supply general information on their collection. Suggestions by the membership include the incorporation of information from submitted MoJ forms, as well as the necessity to involve commercial units. While the database can never provide a completely up-to-date and totally complete record of all human skeletal remains in the country, it will provide an excellent starting point for researchers, which will also be supplemented by information on the most recent excavations and collections presented in the BABAO Annual Review.

4.5 APABE and destructive sampling guidance

APABE has completed a guidance document on destructive sampling in response to repeated queries regarding this issue. Simon Mays pointed out that the document is primarily designed to provide framework advice for museums and other institutions that do not have in-house specialist advisors. Holger Schutkowski pointed out that the document is extremely comprehensive and addresses sampling for different types of analyses.

4.6 Future of the Palaeopathology Short Course

Charlotte Roberts, the current Palaeopathology Association President, has been approached to gauge interest in the course at an international level. She raised this at the PPA meeting in Lille and got a positive response, and will again bring this up at the American PPA meeting in Knoxville next April. Chris Knüsel asked the membership to indicate their interest in the course through show of hands, and a large number of members indicated they would be interested in either taking the course and/or advertising it to colleagues and students. The Centre for Human Bioarchaeology, Museum of London, and the Natural History Museum London have both offered their support for such a course.

4.7 BABAO Charity Status

Gundula Müldner (Treasurer) explained the constitutional changes involved in changing the status of BABAO to one of a charity, which were also posted on the BABAO mailing list in advance of the meeting. The membership voted to adopt the change of the status of BABAO to that of a charity.

4.8	<p><u>Conference bursaries</u> (Gundula Müldner)</p> <p>A number of members, both students and those working in the professional sector, have raised the question of conference bursaries. There has already been some discussion on the issue through the BABAO mailing list in advance of the conference. Current finances certainly do not allow for spending a meaningful amount (around £1,000) on this, and even with this amount available, BABAO could never provide full bursaries, but rather contribute towards the cost of attending the annual conference. If the membership would like conference bursaries, the money for these could be raised two ways – either through reducing the money available for the very successful BABAO grants or by increasing the membership fees. Another small amount of money could possibly be raised through voluntary contributions by members when they register for the annual conference. The issue will be put to the membership again online, including notes on the implications of the different options.</p>
5	<p>Election of Committee Posts (Linda Fibiger)</p>
	<p>Chris Knüsel has completed his current term as Chair of BABAO, and the committee and membership thanked him for all his hard work on behalf of BABAO over the last three years. The new BABAO Chair is Piers Mitchell. As this has created another vacancy on the committee, the membership was asked to vote online for a new Grant Secretary (formerly Non-Executive Member), and this post will be taken up by Jo Buckberry.</p>
6	<p>Grant Report (Piers Mitchell)</p> <p>There were 17 applications for the BABAO grants this year, including 5 from the commercial sector and 12 academic ones. The winner of the commercial grant is Louise Loe from Oxford Archaeology and the academic grant goes to Lisa Cashmore from Exeter University. Both winners will present the results of their research at next year’s BABAO conference in York.</p>
7	<p>Membership (Stephanie Vincent)</p> <p>Due to time constraints, the following report was not presented at the meeting.</p> <p>BABAO currently has 446 active members, which is a drop in numbers from 512 members at the same time last year. This drop in numbers may be a result of the stricter fee payment deadline now in place to fund the new ‘<i>Proceedings</i>’ series. The current membership is made up of 210 waged members (47%), 198 student members (44.4%) and 40 unwaged members (9%).</p> <p>BABAO has 67 new members so far this year, 16 waged and 51 concessionary. BABAO currently has 97 overseas members who make up 21.7% of the total membership. The majority of overseas members come from Europe (n=57), but there are also members from the Americas (n=30) and other areas including Australia, New Zealand and Japan (n=10).</p> <p>74% of last year’s members have renewed their membership, which is an increase from a 57.3% renewal rate from 2010-2011.</p> <p>The majority of membership fees have been paid via Pay Pal this year (n=221), with 150 members paying via standing order and 68 by cheque.</p>
8.	<p>Finance (Gundula Müldner)</p> <p><u>BABAO Accounts</u></p>

The BABAO account balances on 9th September 2012 are as follows:

Reserve Account Balance: +£10,433.35

Current Account Balance: +£1,608.73

Paypal Account: +£3,149.46

Cheques not yet cleared: -£945.70

Total Funds: +£14,245.84

Financial Year 2011

Income 2011

Membership Payments for 2011: +£7,048.93

Interest from Reserve Account: +£5.36

Total Income: £7,054.29

Expenditure 2011

BABAO Grants 2011: -£2,500

Annual Conference Prizes and Gifts: -£265.44

Annual Review 2011 (Printing and Postage): -£2,581.20

Website Maintenance 2011: -£372.00

Committee Travel: -£1,126.00

Total Expenditure 2011: -£6,844.64

Total Income-Expenditure for 2011

+£209.65

Current Financial Year (January-September 2012)

Income:

Membership subscriptions: +£7,947.55

Interest: +£2.68

Total Income 2012 (Jan-Sept): +£7,950.23

Expenditure:

BABAO Grants 2012: -£2,308.00

BABAO Proceedings 2010, Copies for Members (Printing & Postage): -£3,768.12

BABAO @London Anthropology Day (Stall Rental, Promotional Material, Travel):
-£1,036.65

Committee Travel: -£713.65

Total Expenditure 2012 (Jan-Sept): -£7,826.42

Income-Expenditure (1 January – 9 September 2012)

+£123.81

A priority for the next few months will be BABAO's registration with the Charity Commission and confirmation of its tax-free status.

9 Publicity (Tim Thompson)

Due to time constraints, the following report was not presented at the meeting.

9.1	<p><u>General Enquiries</u></p> <p>Over the past year a steady stream of enquiries from the public and from professional organisations were dealt with. Most recently there was a lot of interest in the conference sessions.</p>
9.2	<p><u>BABAO Website</u></p> <p>Website is continually being tidied. The studentHUB section is now up-and-running and has advice etc. on there for our student membership. This is an area set aside just for our students, but they have to let us know what they'd like to see here. They can contact Tim Thompson or Evilena directly.</p> <p>Photos can also be incorporated into the website, and if members have some from conferences (such as this) then do forward them on and I'll upload them for everyone. Important documents are on the website too, including minutes from committee meetings. Please ensure that you forward Tim Thompson updated details (e.g. course weblinks etc.) if you want them on the website. Some people have emailed struggling to access content on the website, but generally this is because they are not logged in. Most of the content is Members only.</p>
9.3	<p><u>Grey Literature</u></p> <p>There has been discussion for a while about the collation of osteological reports in the grey literature. It was proposed that the BABAO website might be a mechanism for this. This has been explored in detail, and it is possible for us to host such literature, as .pdf files with searchable metatags, but it would require a significant upgrade of the website's underlying content management software.</p> <p>Tim Thompson has been in discussions with ADS. They are naturally keen to work with BABAO on this issue and have highlighted the many benefits from doing this. Whilst we explore all options, we recommend that members should select the newly created 'Human Remains Report' as a publication type in the Project Bibliography section of OASIS. This would allow the beginnings of a searchable database. BABAO will be involved in discussions regarding the forthcoming redesign of the OASIS system with a view to including a searchable database of osteological reports. With this in mind, BABAO needs to produce a list of metadata that we will use as searchable terms. Tim Thompson will compile this list, but will need your suggestions for search terms to him by the end of October. He will then forward the proposed list around for general discussion. Note that your suggestions need to be specific to the osteological reports, so 'period', 'location' etc. is already taken care of.</p>
10.	<p>BABAO Conference 2013</p> <p>The next BABAO conference will take place from the 13-15 September 2013 in York. This meeting be organised by Malin Holst and Matthew Collins.</p>
11.	<p>Any other business</p> <p>None</p>